

Message Text

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PAGE 01 THE HA 01307 121438Z

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-02 INR-07 L-02

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FM AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5441

INFO AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY OSLO

AMEMBASSY PARIS

USMISSION NATO

AMEMBASSY ANKARA

AMEMBASSY ATHENS

AMEMBASSY LISBON

AMEMBASSY LUXEMBOURG

AMEMBASSY OTTAWA

AMEMBASSY REYKJAVIK

AMEMBASSY ROME

USDEL MBFR VIENNA

C O N F I D E N T I A L THE HAGUE 1307

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, NATO, PARM

SUBJECT: VIEWS OF LABOR PARTY PARLIAMENTARY LEADER ON
FORTHCOMING PARTY CONGRESS

1. DURING MEETING WITH CHARGE ON MARCH 11, ED VAN THIJN,
LEADER OF THE LABOR PARTY GROUP IN THE SECOND CHAMBER
OF THE NETHERLANDS PARLIAMENT, EXPRESSED CONFIDENCE
THAT THE FORTHCOMING CONGRESS OF HIS PARTY (APRIL 10-
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PAGE 02 THE HA 01307 121438Z

12 IN AMSTERDAM) WOULD COME OUT ALL RIGHT WITH NO

DAMAGING CONSEQUENCES FOR THE NETHERLANDS' CONTINUED MEMBERSHIP IN NATO. NOTING THAT CURRENT PUBLIC OPINION POLLS SHOWED CLEAR MAJORITY SUPPORT FOR NATO ON THE PART OF RANK-AND-FILE LABOR PARTY MEMBERS AS WELL AS NORMAL LABOR PARTY VOTERS, VAN THIJN ANTICIPATED THAT THERE WOULD BE A COMPARABLE MAJORITY AMONG THE 1500 DELEGATES TO THE CONGRESS FOR CONTINUED DUTCH MEMBERSHIP IN NATO. ON THE OTHER HAND, HE FELT THERE WAS A DEFINITE POSSIBILITY OF RESOLUTION BEING VOTED THAT WOULD CALL FOR THE NETHERLANDS TO TERMINATE ITS NATO MEMBERSHIP SOME YEARS HENCE. VAN THIJN SAID HE AND OTHER PARTY LEADERS WOULD WORK AGAINST ANY SUCH RESOLUTION PRIOR TO ITS SUBMISSION AND ON THE FLOOR OF THE CONGRESS IF IT WERE SUBMITTED. VAN THIJN SAID THAT SUCH A RESOLUTION WOULD HAVE NO BINDING EFFECT ON EITHER THE LEADERSHIP OF THE LABOR PARTY OR THE PRESENT NETHERLANDS GOVERNMENT SINCE IT HAD NOT FIGURED IN THE ELECTION CAMPAIGN PROGRAM BY THE PROGRESSIVE PARTIES. HE RECOGNIZED, HOWEVER, THAT A RESOLUTION OF THIS KIND COULD WEAKEN THE STANDING AND INFLUENCE OF THE NETHERLANDS IN NATO COUNCILS.

2. VAN THIJN LIKWISE THOUGHT THERE WAS AN EVEN BIGGER CHANCE THAT THE CONGRESS WOULD ADOPT A RESOLUTION CALLING FOR THE REMOVAL OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS FROM DUTCH TERRITORY. AGAIN, THIS WOULD HAVE NO IMMEDIATE PRACTICAL EFFECT BUT IT COULD WELL HAVE SOME INFLUENCE ON THE POLICY ATTITUDE OF THE LABOR PARTY IN A FUTURE GOVERNMENT. VAN THIJN MADE IT CLEAR THAT HE HELD NO BRIEF FOR THE CONCEPT OF TRANSFERRING NUCLEAR WEAPONS ACROSS THE BORDER INTO GERMANY SINCE IT WAS NOT RPT NOT THE PRESENCE OF THOSE WEAPONS IN THE NETHERLANDS THAT GAVE THE RUSSIANS A PROBLEM BUT RATHER THE MUCH GREATER NUCLEAR WEAPONRY LOCATED IN GERMANY. VAN THIJN ADDED, HOWEVER, THAT IT WAS POLITICALLY MOST DESIRABLE TO GET TACTICAL NUCLEAR WEAPONS INCLUDED IN THE SCOPE OF THE MBFR NEGOTIATIONS. TANGUY

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